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their influence. They never should be cultivated, as is often done by over-sympathetic attention. Nevertheless neurasthenia is a disorder of the nervous system and not a matter of the imagination. Disregard of the real complaints of the patient only inculcates a lack of confidence in both physician and nurse. A sympathetic appreciation of the difficulties, a courageous adherence to the line of treatment planned by the physician, a tactfulness more needed than in other diseases win success and earn a well merited gratitude.

## WRONG IMPRESSIONS OF ARMY LIFE

By MARGARET McCLOSKEY MURPHY, R.N.

*Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island*

Since the publication, in the September, 1914, JOURNAL, of an article on "The Duties of an Army Nurse," many letters have reached me asking for further information on the subject. It is amusing, not to say ridiculous, to note the ideas which some civilian nurses have of army life. One says that she would not like living and sleeping in a tent the whole year around. Another says she had been informed that the army nurses do no actual nursing, that the patients, all being men, have male attendants who do the nursing and finally that the nurses' work is to dust and keep the wards in order. This nurse adds that she would consider her three years of training wasted in such a life. Another writes that she has been told that army nurses are most unhappy and that they scarcely ever complete their full term of service.

I feel it my duty to write this article in order to correct these wrong ideas of army life. The nurse need have no fear in entering the ranks. The nurses do not live in tents, at all. The army hospitals are large and modern in every respect and the actual nursing is no different from that in civilian life. For instance, the Army General Hospital in the Presidio of San Francisco has fourteen large wards and two operating rooms and everything that one would see in the most up-to-date civilian hospital. Of course, it is the nurses who do the nursing and they have no cleaning to do other than dusting and keeping the ward in neat order. The Corps-men do the cleaning; they are non-combatant soldiers and belong to the Hospital Corps which is an army organization in itself, but is not counted in the regular strength of the army. They perform such duties as are not expected of a woman when a man is in attendance. They all understand nursing work but do not do general nursing where there are nurses on duty. There are some wards that have no nurses assigned to them and there are also hundreds of post hospitals

which have not been able to secure nurses. In these places the Corpsmen do the nursing, for the patients must have care.

There are one hundred and fifty nurses in the army and that is a very small number when one considers that they are distributed all over the United States as well as in Hawaii and the Philippines. Therefore they cannot be in every ward.

In regard to the idea that army nurses do not complete the full term of their appointment civilian nurses are misinformed. The present Chief Nurse at the Walter Reed Hospital in Washington, D. C., has been at least fourteen years in the Service; Miss E. R——, who was in Fort Bayard, N. M., two years ago, was then in her fifteenth year and Mrs. M. B. H——, who resigned two years ago, had completed thirteen years of service in the army. By-the-way, the former and latter of these three nurses have been around the world and at Government expense, too. When they were assigned to duty in the Philippines, it was shortly after the Spanish-American War when the route across the Pacific was not yet discovered to be the shorter way. They sailed from New York, crossed the Atlantic, passed Gibraltar, thence by the Mediterranean through the Sues Canal, stopping at Cairo and so on until their destination was reached. Their term of service being completed, they came home across the Pacific, from Manila to San Francisco, thence across the continent to Washington, D. C., thus making a complete circle of the globe. But to continue, I could name at least a dozen nurses who have passed ten years in the army and as for those who are in their third term of appointment, that is to say, those who are completing a six years' service, they are so numerous that I could not begin to count them. Seeing that reappointment is entirely voluntary on the part of the nurse, the fact that she engages for a second and third term and so on, speaks for itself as to how well they are treated in the Army.

However, there is one class of nurse that does not get along and usually does not complete the service. In all hospitals, military and civil alike, there are some nurses who want a "good time" and who pay more attention to that than to their work. To them rules and regulations are always irksome and sooner or later they either resign or are asked to resign. A nurse who cares for her profession will obey the rules, will never neglect her work and will not make her name a by-word among the patients.

A nurse who intends remaining in the nursing world need not hesitate to take up army work. Beside the pleasant social side of the life, there is opportunity for saving money for a rainy day, as expenses are few and she can save the greater part of her salary.